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The
COMMONWEAL

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The Iceland Station

NO NEW reaction can be expected in this country to the occupation of the Iceland station. It represents no new turn in administration policy, in constitutional development or in military and naval strategy. It carries the trend further, so that acclamation, question or objection becomes sharper and another long step nearer to resolution.

Toward what destination is the country moving? Of course, the future is unseen and uncertain, but Americans are still responsible for their actions and particularly for those steps deliberately taken whose effects they frankly admit are beyond their vision. The latter may indeed be the most serious actions if they lead to a state of the world in which human control is forfeited.

The Iceland occupation appears to be an important step toward hemispheric naval and military, economic and political organization, strengthened by means of armed projections within the spheres of Europe, Asia and Africa. The power of the United States is being amplified and is being given an increasingly authoritative, streamline and supple control through executive concentration. The United States is approaching closer and closer to unrestricted war with Germany and Japan.

Toward what kind of eventual peace settlement are United States actions tending? That is very hard to conceive—an important fact in the current situation. Skipping in order to settle upon a few alternatives that seem possible general ends of successful prosecution of present policies, one might suggest: a world-wide "dictate" by a victorious American-English bloc; a reversion to something like the fragile framework of between-the-wars; the powerful organization of this hemisphere with the British Empire, leaving the rest of the world with no similar integration which could offer competition. These possible outcomes of American policy hardly seem acceptable on the basis of justice or expediency. We are obliged to look for some peace settlement more creative and tolerable.

Couldn't the United States start steering Europe toward a peace settlement now? We should worry about the job right away, while a relatively stable America continues to furnish the world with a going fly wheel. A conceivable first step could be to begin insisting on more definite *quid pro quos* to American action. For instance, London and the other European governments which we recognize and which are linked against the nazis, could be persuaded to start now the formation and implementation of a post-war set-up. Typical problems which the governments might begin to face concern the status of Poland, the "four freedoms" in the USSR, the status within the world and European community of Greece and Jugoslavia; the disposition of North Africa and Ethiopia, of the Near East—most explicitly, the operating relation between England and her friends. These problems are not essentially more academic now than they will be on the table of any eventual peace conference. It seems literally foolish to go ahead without some conception of what is possible and what is wanted by the others and by ourselves.

Then there is no reason why the United States should not try to bring into studies and initiatives for the post-war world those other countries which are less close to England. Spain and Portugal and France will exist after the war. Then the peoples of Italy and those within the auxiliary camp of the Axis could be brought into discussion or under discussion: the Hungarians, Romanians, Danes, etc. And the German people must be the final objective of peace efforts. We are advancing toward war, no one disputes. We are not advancing toward peace.

Russia and the War

THE AMERICAN COMMUNISTS now have "their" war. They say it was not of their choosing and in fact it was not. They say that since Soviet Russia is the defender of the workers throughout the world the interest of these workers everywhere is to defend Soviet Russia against the German attack. As a corollary to this central

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interest they say that aid must be given also to Great Britain, whose war purposes they have always opposed. To instrument this policy they call for intensive armament production and for workers' collaboration in this production.

American interventionists have "their" war and they have had it for some time. They say that since Germany is the enemy of freedom everywhere it is to the interest of free peoples everywhere to resist the German attack. As a corollary to this central interest they say that aid must not be denied the Soviet Union—whose very existence they detest. The parallelism is obvious. Communists and interventionists follow the necessary logic of their position. To each man, each conscience, "his" war; "its" justifying ideology.

The newspapers all over the country have been amusing themselves opposing the communist attitudes of before and after the German attack on Russia. But it is time that all those who consider communism to be a serious menace should realize that it would not be a serious menace if incoherent. That communists everywhere should unite in defense of the Soviet Union is strictly in accord with the obvious principle of international communism.

Communism, then, has entered the war against Germany. With what potential results? It is said that the presence of Russia as a *de facto* ally of Great Britain makes any ideological unity against the totalitarian states impossible. The same objection was raised against Tsarist participation in the last war. Both objections are valid only when war is considered a contest for supremacy between clearly definable and static civilizations. In neither case is the objection valid if we consider war an incident in the constant mutation of social organisms. Indeed the example of the last war, in which Tsarism was replaced by communism, permits us to suppose that neither communism, nazism nor our capitalistic liberalism need necessarily survive the present war. This war, or rather the worldwide state of war, will leave no country unaltered when it ends.

We have always attempted to see beyond this war to the peace it will effect. For us the question has always been where will mankind find itself when this violent motion subsides. War proceeds from instability; its effect is to expose human societies to change. Beyond victory, beyond defeat this change and the nature of this change is all that counts and all that remains when the war is ended. The purpose of all intelligent men, on all sides, who are engaged in the present war is to influence and determine the nature of this change in society. This is the reason for the existence of the several ideologies which now struggle for supremacy. Man's spirit, man's will and man's brain, although their manifestations are exasperated and over-simplified, even, and especially in war, seek to determine man's fate.

The entrance of Russia into the war and the identification of the United States with one party to this war mean primarily that the whole world is now open and exposed to change. Society, already integrated by the industrial revolution and its consequences, and now further integrated through German conquest and German threats of conquest, is entering now and as a unit into a pre-revolutionary state. National units are destroyed or threatened; national societies everywhere are transformed or open to transformation; society is disorganized—its future organization remains to be determined. A military victory can ensure its organization only if that victory is attained by men who know what they want. The nazis know, or think they know; the Soviets know, or think they know. We, who refuse the solution they both propose, are forced to refuse that solution on every plane. But our refusal and our opposition will not form the new world. We will not form the new world until we know what we want it to be.

The Fulda Pastoral

THE COMPLETE TEXT of the German pastoral letter issued from the episcopal conference at Fulda is not yet at hand, but it is evident from the Associated Press excerpts that it is a significant document. The characterization it bears in some quarters as the German bishops' "first protest since the war" is less than accurate; the leaders of Catholicism in the Reich have indicated before this in courageous terms their objections to both the deeds and the doctrines of totalitarianism. But the present pronouncement is very explicit, and it moreover gains heavily in meaning from the fact that it was given to German Catholics just after the outbreak of hostilities between the Soviet and the Reich. The absence in it of any reference to those hostilities is not, of course, to be construed as a sign of apathy in the German hierarchy to the dangers presented by organized atheistic materialism. But it may fairly be read as a sign that the bishops refuse to be deflected from their just consideration of immediate and serious grievances by a conflict which every circumstance, past and present, shows to be essentially opportunistic. Communism embodies a menace to rights human and divine; but if such rights are ever successfully vindicated, the Catholics of Germany have bitter reason to know it will not be by their present government. The bishops waste no breath on that assumption. They have patriotic and generous praise for the German soldiery, and they enumerate the Church's own sacrifices, cheerfully made, for the prosecution of the war. But they explicitly condemn the increasing limitations put upon the Church—the past loss of teaching schools, the imminent closing of nursery schools, the nullification of the Catholic press, the deliberate Christlessness of officially circulated

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teaching. Their appeal to the body of German Catholics is on the grave basis that the very existence of Christianity in their country is at stake. How strong that body remains under these and other multiplied tyrannies cannot be known. But it has defied tyrants before this and seen them retreat; and its leadership retains the courage of a glorious tradition.

CIO Gains and Splits

"I COULDN'T think of a strike affecting national defense orders at the moment," said Sidney Hillman (July 8). Mr. Hillman's memory did not seem letter perfect, for at least two strikes of the sort were in progress when he spoke (Keasbey and Mattison; Heller Brothers). But by and large the impression his remark conveyed was true. Labor's latest major victory had been won only two days before, when the UMW and the Southern coal operators signed a two-year contract doing away with the long-established wage differential between Northern and Southern miners. This means an increase for Southern miners of no less than 25 percent; the Northern operators some weeks ago agreed to a basic daily wage of $7 in place of the $6 provided for in the old contract. Furthermore, the Southern agreement included the Harlan County Coal Operators Association: perhaps "Bloody Harlan" is to be bloody no more. Here is a triumph for the CIO matched only by its recent agreement with Ford. It was followed by a reported softening up of the Administration on its attitude toward compulsory arbitration of labor disputes and the amendments to the May Bill now before the House. This bill has as its primary purpose the amendment of the Selective Service Act by lowering the draft age to 28—a purpose to which there is no serious opposition except on the ground that many skilled mechanics are in their early thirties and that lowering the draft age would make it impossible for the government to use the draft as a weapon to hold such workers in line. It was to satisfy this opposition that the May Bill's labor amendments were formulated; they give the government a much stronger weapon against labor than the Selective Service Act could ever afford; they permit the President to use the armed forces to "protect" non-striking workers in defense plants and define interference with such protection as sabotage, punishable by a fine of $5,000 or five years' imprisonment or both. Naturally all organized labor is opposed to giving the government any such power, and it looks as if the Administration has decided to accede to labor's opposition.

Meanwhile the old split between the CIO and AFL is dwarfed in importance by the split within the CIO itself. More and more the conservative right wing is being cut off from the radical left wing, with John L. Lewis battling along after power and leaning very much to the left, largely because of his opposition to Roosevelt (and Hillman). This cleavage cuts across some unions, like the Newspaper Guild, and separates others, like the National Maritime Union and the Amalgamated. Philip Murray makes a good contact man with government; so far the Lewis and Curran blasts have been directed against Hillman. But what the eventual result of the split will be is anybody's guess. Certainly it would be unfortunate if internal dissentions were to fragment even more the American labor movement.

Can the Mayor Do It?

THOSE WERE brave words with which our Mayor launched the New York Dress Institute, announcing "formally" that New York City "is the fashion center of the world," and asserting that "this leadership has come through no accident . . . not a result of the war or any other extraneous cause. . . . It is ours by right." With equal vigor, and a much more far-flunge range of demonstration, Mrs. Roosevelt backed the claim: "I think the WPA projects dealing with art, music, literature and the drama have helped to make us a nation that is able to say we have made of New York the fashion center of the world." But still, a tiny doubt persists. Even though the Dress Institute labels were sewn to the twenty advance fall models displayed on the occasion, by the International Ladies Garment Workers Union's twenty prettiest dressmakers, with (sic) twenty golden needles. Even though each label bears a silhouette of the New York skyline. Even though the Dress Institute is going to spend a million and a half publicizing New York's claims to fashion leadership, and Mr. David Dubinsky handed over $25,000 of it, part of the I.L.G.W.U. pledge, on the spot. It is of course to the highest degree creditable that the 800 manufacturing concerns in the Institute will make their millions of dresses under the I.L.G.W.U. standards of labor, as the label will testify. Mrs. Roosevelt speaks truly in saying that this will confer the important benefit of enabling the wearer to wear "with a comfortable conscience." Moreover, the admirable New York practice of making pretty and chic dresses very cheaply is evidently to be adopted as part of the Institute's policy, since this first important style showing lined up a smart little $1.95 model beside one priced at $295. But the tiny doubt remains. American dresses *are* very pretty. But what is world style? Partly color, partly combinations, mostly perhaps the creative power of line. Where it exists, it is instantly felt, and it communicates itself by its own subtle authority. If the Mayor's *ipse dixit* can really transport it here from its immemorial habitation in Paris, he is even better than we thought him.

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King Farouk and the Egyptians

A first-hand report on the Egyptian King, his advisers and the government's opposition.

By **Pierre Crabites**

A GLANCE at a map of the Eastern Hemisphere will show that Egypt is the keystone of the Muslim world. Her sovereign is moreover Islam's foremost monarch. With Hitler making every effort to arouse all Muhammadans against England, it is the moral courage of King Farouk and his advisers in opposing the insidious attacks of nazi propaganda that is giving Britain an opportunity to stand up against Germany in the Near East. Had they faltered in April, 1941, when Hitler was pushing his way through Yugoslavia and Greece, conditions in the Levant would be incomparably worse than they are today.

My acquaintance with Egypt began in 1906 when I visited the Nile Valley as a tourist. My intimate knowledge of the country goes back to 1911, when President Taft sent me to Egypt to represent the United States on the bench of the Cairo International Tribunal. I held this post until 1936, when I resigned to become connected with the Louisiana State University, but returned to the Levant in the summer of 1939 in order to survey Egypt and Palestine on the eve of the war which I knew then was in the offing.

I had not been received in audience by King Farouk at the time of my resignation. He was then a minor; a regency governed in his name, and judges were not presented to him. He had however become what the Spaniards call *Re Proprietario* on July 9, 1937. My wife had known the King's mother before the late King Fuad made her his Queen. I was on friendly terms with his maternal grandfather and his maternal uncles. And his late Majesty, King Fuad, did me the honor of receiving me in audience oftener than my official rank more or less required. I had written *"Ismail the Maligned,"* a work which defended the memory of Khedive Ismail, King Fuad's father, against unfair attacks made by a chorus of historians and pseudo-historians. This volume won for me a personal standing at Abdine Palace that enabled me to learn certain things about the upbringing of King Farouk.

King Farouk's education

His late Majesty was a man of outstanding ability and of infinite patience. On his personal desk at Abdine Palace and Kouba Palace, Cairo, and at Montazar Palace, Alexandria, a small gold frame encircling the one word, "Patience," was always discreetly prominent. His Majesty explained: "My father lost his throne because he tried to do too much too quickly. Had he known what patience means he would not have been forced to abdicate. I have schooled myself to be patient. And I keep the word before me to remind me of my resolution." And he added: "I want my son to have this idea constantly present in his thoughts. His English governess and his English tutors, who have charge of his education, are collaborating with me in instilling in his mind the meaning of patience."

His Majesty was a master of the French language. He said *"sa gouvernante anglaise et ses instituteurs anglais qui sont chargés de son education."* He used the word *"education,"* not *"instruction."* And, in French, this distinction is of paramount importance. "Education," in French, means "upbringing," "formation of character," "moral training." "Instruction" connotes "book learning," "scholarship," "intellectual gymnastics." In a word, King Fuad made it transparently clear, not only by that one phrase but by other incidental remarks, that he was determined that his only son, the heir to the throne, should have an English moral background and an English intellectual approach to all problems, as far as was consistent with his Muslin heredity and fidelity to the faith of his ancestors.

The last step taken by King Fuad in the formation of his son's character was to send the young Prince to England to round out his education and complete his instruction. And in order to transfer to this foreign school the atmosphere of an Islamic environment sympathetic to English ideals and to Anglo-Saxon principles, Ahmed Hassanein Pasha was placed in charge of Prince Farouk's civil household.

Lord Rodd, who was for years England's Ambassador to the Quirinal, wrote of Ahmed Hassanein Pasha in an introduction for the latter's book, "Lost Oases":

> I have had the pleasure of his [Hassanein Pasha's] acquaintance for a number of years, since he was the contemporary and friend of my son at Balliol. . . . He has occasionally consulted me as an elder friend and as the father of my son on certain matters of personal interest

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to himself. I may therefore claim to know him intimately and I cannot refrain from recording my testimony that in all such questions, and especially in a very delicate matter which he submitted to me, I have always found him generous in his judgment and, for I know no other way of expressing what I mean, a great gentleman.

The King's circle

I have myself known Hassanein Pasha since April, 1915. President Wilson's first Consul General to Cairo, Olney Arnold, introduced us to one another. He had said, "Come and take pot luck with me today. I want you to meet Ahmed Hassanein, a young Egyptian who, General Maxwell says, is as fine a young gentleman as he has ever met. We three will be alone as I would like you to give him for me a thorough 'once over.'"

The impression he made was certainly favorable. Never once, across the twenty-five years that have elapsed since then, have I revised this impression, and I have seen some little of him. He was attached to the Egyptian Legation at Washington in 1923-1924 and I am sure that scores of my readers will endorse that view.

It was most gratifying, then, to find, upon reaching Egypt in June, 1939, that Hassanein Pasha was His Majesty's Grand Chamberlain. It may be unwise, of course, to place undue stress upon the fact that a man of honor holds a decorative post. He may be esconced in the seat of the mighty and have no more power than a label on a bottle. But it was soon apparent that my friend was not a mere figurehead.

His Majesty graciously consented to receive me in audience at Alexandria shortly after I had signed the Royal Register. When I had returned to my hotel, Hassanein Pasha rang me up and said that His Majesty "invited" me to dine with him *en petit comité* that night on the Royal Yacht.

The weather was bad and the repast was served in a private dining room of the Royal Yacht Club. We were but three persons present, His Majesty, Hassanein Pasha and I. After coffee had been served there was not even a waiter or an attendant of any kind within earshot. We remained together, conversing either in English, French, Italian or Arabic until about 1.00 A.M. "We took down our hair," as would have been said in the days when women had long hair. There was no stiff formality. There was a full, frank exchange of views on topics that interested us.

I have hesitated before writing this because it may readily be misunderstood. But I have deliberately assumed this risk because I can think of no other way of bringing out how close Hassanein Pasha then was to his Sovereign. Lord Rodd has fixed his status as a gentleman in whom England and America may place implicit confidence. No mere courtier, no mere statesman imposed upon a ruler by the exigencies of politics, would have been permitted to have "taken down his hair" that night. No wine did away with barriers. None was served. It is not so much what was said or the subjects discussed. I refer solely to the wholesome, healthy, trustful relationship between the King, who was not yet out of his teens, and the experienced man of the world who was his confidant.

A great many things have taken place since that night in June, 1939. Hassanein Pasha is no longer King Farouk's Grand Chamberlain. He now fills the far more important post of Chief of the Royal Household. This makes him the man of the hour in Egyptian public life. The wax and parchment of power are in the hands of the Prime Minister, but unless he is most assertive, most tenacious and most dynamic, the Chief of the Royal Household is apt to exercise a more subtle control over events than he does. My impression of the present Egyptian set-up, however, is that Hassanein Pasha is so eminently the quintessence of tact, that he will efface himself before the Prime Minister and do everything possible to add to the prestige of that high office. Loyalty is bred in the marrow of his bone.

The present Prime Minister, Hussein Sirry Pasha, and I were neighbors in Egypt. I know his background perhaps more intimately than I do him. He is the brother-in-law of the late Ragheb Badr Pasha who became my colleague on the International Tribunals of Egypt when I entered their service. Judge Badr made it clear, years ago, that his wife's young brother was being given a thoroughly English training. The best of moral upbringing surrounded him. His father, Ismail Sirry Pasha, was a man of the highest character, and this is not hearsay. Intimately acquainted with Hassein Sirry Pasha's environment, I therefore have no hesitancy in giving him confidence.

The present President of the Egyptian Senate, the second man in the Egyptian political hierarchy, is Muhammad Mahmud Khalil Pasha. His European culture is French, not English. He is a lawyer by profession whose friendship I formed shortly after I reached Cairo. The possessor of very considerable inherited wealth, he is an outstanding art critic and a music lover in the best sense of the term. He personifies the Cairo Philharmonic Society, and I know of nobody anywhere who is more artistic.

Muhammad Mahmud Khalil Pasha's beautiful home on the banks of the Nile, presided over with great grace by his French wife, is a veritable museum. What makes it so attractive to me is the fact that his art collection is limited to nineteenth century French masters. He has had the good judgment to choose an attractive epoch and to adhere to it. Methodical in all he undertakes, thorough in all he does, and having the purse with which to back his opinions, I know of no collection

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of the same specific character anywhere that surpasses his. He has a fortune in the paintings that adorn his walls.

Across twenty-five years of residence in Egypt I lunched and dined quite frequently at Muhammad Mahmud Khalil Pasha's home. His menus were excellent, not merely expensive food but dainty morsels. And one could always count upon meeting at his table the most interesting people Cairo had to offer. At these international gatherings French was the only language used. His culture is French. He is a Parisian at heart although genuinely patriotic. He was always very close to the French Legation. He gave most generously to French charities. He is a *Grand Officier* of the Legion of Honor. Yet he was never on a French leash. There is, therefore, every reason for believing that the capitulation of Paris to Hitler has had no effect upon his attitude in the present crisis.

The President of the Chamber of Deputies, Dr. Ahmed Maher Pasha, has neither Muhammad Mahmud Khalil Pasha's wealth nor artistic temperament. He is a man of energy and the son of a successful physician. He does things, and has no expensive hobbies. I understand that he showed great ability as a financier when he was the Chairman of the Egyptian Chamber's Finance Committee. While I have known him for several years, I have at no time been as close to him as I am to his brother, Ali Maher Pasha, one of Egypt's outstanding statesmen and a former Prime Minister. With the purpose of estimating how Egyptian public men react to Hitler's attempt to line up the Islamic world against England, I do not think I could do better than quote what Albert Viton wrote about him in the January *Foreign Affairs*: "Dr. Ahmed Maher Pasha, President of the Chamber of Deputies and one of the most respected men in Egypt, also came out repeatedly to plead for active support of Britain."

I am convinced that the distinguished President of the Chamber of Deputies is entirely wrong in urging that Egypt send troops into the battle line. Such a step would serve to stir up Muslim unrest against Egypt and would be most dangerous. I refer to his suggestion merely to bring out the fact that he, who was looked upon as the arch enemy of England when I was on the International bench, is, to my mind, allowing his conversion to carry him too far. Such, I am afraid, is often the case with converts.

Before passing to the leaders of the Opposition, to those who represent the *Wafd,* that party of advanced nationalism which formerly dominated the political scene, it might be well to say a word about Sheikh El Maraghi. He is the Rector of Al Azhar University, the greatest Muslim Collegiate Mosque in the world. He is not in politics, but, if he is not a political factor, I do not know my Egypt. He is loyal to the present dynasty, loyal to his Arab blood and loyal to his faith. These three loyalties, each of which does him honor, are outstanding factors in enabling King Farouk to render Britain the great service he is at present giving her under trying conditions.

Hag Amin El Husseini, the Mufti of Jerusalem, is now endeavoring to arouse the Muslim world against England. Had Sheikh El Maraghi faltered in his loyalty to the Egyptian throne, had he allowed his natural resentment against Britain for having supported Zionism in Palestine for many years to have shaped his conduct, King Farouk's lot would have been far more difficult than it is. As things are, the very fact that Al Azhar, with all its ramifications, stands by England in the observance of benevolent neutrality—of passive alliance—is an anchor of safety of supreme importance.

The opposition

The outstanding leaders of the Opposition are Moustafa Nahas Pasha and William Makram Ebeid Pasha. Moustafa Nahas Pasha is a Muslim, a devout Muslim who would die for his faith without a second's hesitation, but who is as tolerant a man as I have ever known. He is too essentially tolerant to be moved by any artificial propaganda methods such as Hitler employs. And besides, as Prime Minister, he negotiated the treaty with England, dated August 26, 1936, which King Farouk is enforcing. It is logical to assume that he will be consistent with himself and not attack his sovereign for carrying out the pact he himself signed.

William Makram Ebeid Pasha, Moustafa Nahas Pasha's *alter ego,* is an Egyptian Christian, a Copt. His parents were devoted adherents of the American Protestant Missionaries, named him in honor of one of them and had him educated in their schools. He is one of their most loyal alumni. A born orator and passionately fond of politics, he is a leader of leaders. I first met him some twenty odd years ago when he was Sir Malcolm McIlwraith's private secretary. I lost touch with him when I left Egypt and I have no personal knowledge regarding his present attitude toward England. Newspapers which formerly reflected his views have recently adopted a policy of insisting upon Egypt's declaring war on Hitler. They are, as a prominent journalist recently put it, overwhelmingly in favor of active defense of Egypt's independence.

These outbursts of the Egyptian press leave me cold. I have seen some excellent acrobatics in my day. Rapid fire somersaults have always commanded my admiration, but frankly, the way certain Cairene journalists can do a hand turn would put a vaudeville artist to shame. Of course, this stricture does not apply to all Egyptian papers.

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If I refuse to attach any great weight to this overwhelming sentiment of a section of the Egyptian press, and refuse to be impressed by the overemphasis which the President of the Chamber of Deputies now puts upon his Anglophile sentiments, I cannot brush aside, in any such way, the position taken by Dr. Hafiz Afifi Pasha. He is not an opportunist. He is a man of moral courage. He refuses to stoop to the arts of the demagogue. An able medical practitioner, he has that subtle charm known as "the perfect bed-side manner." Trusting him as I do (although I disagree with him) I must take cognizance of the sincerity that prompted the speech he delivered on August 28, 1940, urging Egypt to become England's active ally.

It is the simultaneous existence of (1) this well-defined, honest belief of courageous Egyptians such as Dr. Hafiz Afifi Pasha and (2) the innate Muslim resentment against England's policy in Palestine, that make King Farouk's position so transcendently difficult. The young monarch and his constitutional advisers have shown commendable courage and qualities of real statesmanship in refusing to yield to extremists. They are faithfully executing the terms of the Anglo-Egyptian accord of August 26, 1936, which makes of Egypt a passive not an active ally of England. They could not possibly render greater service to the cause of democracy. Were they to attempt to carry too heavy a burden its very weight would crush them and hurt England.

Those who, in good faith, are endeavoring to have the commitments of that pact enlarged, are allowing their impatience to get the better of them. The late King Fuad's motto was "Patience." His Royal son is helping England to the utmost by adhering to that slogan. If, like his Khedivial grandfather, he had tried to do too much too quickly, then a revolution, born of Islamic distrust of England, might have defeated his efforts. Such an uprising would have played into the hands of nazism and made the defense of the Suez Canal an increasingly difficult problem. It would have greatly facilitated the capture of the oil fields of Iraq.

"Making Something Out of Nothing"

Every town can benefit from this inspiring community effort.

By **Fillmore Hyde**

ALL Mrs. John Morrison Curtis did was open a door, and the whole town of Summit, New Jersey, swept through. To be literal, this grey-haired, blue-eyed woman had an idea which from the start electrified the town, and is still growing.

A year ago last spring Mrs. Curtis put a want ad in the local paper asking for things ordinarily thrown away during housecleaning—old clothes, shoes, curtains, boxes—anything. She would make these useless things useful, make something out of nothing. She knew about dress designing, she was handy with the needle, and she planned to recondition whatever she got and send it to the harried civilians of Europe.

She expected a response, of course, but she never expected to be knocked down in the rush. Friends, acquaintances, strangers emptied their attics, collected old woolens from the backs of closets. Soon her living room overflowed with shabby and outmoded donations. Mrs. Curtis couldn't begin to handle it all herself, so she got two friends to help. Two weeks later all three women were snowed under with donations, so, after consultation with the Red Cross, Mrs. Curtis organized the Refugee Relief Workroom and asked the town of Summit to come in and help.

The town did. Last month 1,500 women from Summit and the vicinity were enrolled as workers, and the idea had spread to thousands of other women in 45 cooperating groups, some of them 90 miles away. Virtually every merchant in Summit had contributed to make the Workroom a rousing success. Cobblers, laundries, dry cleaners, department stores, printers, all lent a hand. In the past year the Workroom turned out 35,000 reconditioned garments, 2,300 fresh quilts, 36,000 baby garments, 7,200 garments for boys and girls, 2,100 pairs of shoes. All in perfect condition—things that anyone would be glad to have.

Not with money

"We are not going to do it with money," Mrs. Curtis said when she started. "We are going to ask people for something much more valuable—their cooperation, their skill and their time."

The first inkling of what Summit was prepared to do came when Mrs. Curtis called on an A & P executive in the town. She asked if the new Workroom could occupy the store on Main Street the

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A & P had just vacated. The lease had three months to run; the rent was paid. "You bet you can," he said. "I'm only sorry it isn't in apple pie order. Needs a little paint."

That afternoon she was telling a friend about it, while out for a drive. The friend's chauffeur, a red-haired Scot, turned around and touched his cap. "I could get my friends and we'd paint the place for you in our spare time over the weekend," he offered. And so it was. The local hardware store donated paint, free. A painting contractor lent brushes and ladders. "Glad to do it," he said. Women of Summit emptied their work-baskets, gave scissors, thread, needles, thimbles.

Mrs. Curtis remembers with amusement the discussions that took place as to how long the Workroom should stay open each day. Ought it to be three hours each morning, or would two hours be enough? The town of Summit settled the argument. The amount of material that poured in, the number of workers that volunteered, kept the Workroom open six days a week all day and three evenings.

Few of the women can give whole days away from their domestic or business occupations, but all give what time they can. There are no regular hours required. "People don't like to get tangled up in regulations," says Mrs. Curtis, and acting on that principle she has kept the records simple. Each worker's card shows a series of scribbled entries: "June 18—took material for 12 caps." Then underneath: "June 23—brought in 12 caps."

No bossing

Another principle that has made the Workroom successful is—no bossing. The materials that come in are so wildly variegated that there is plenty of choice as to the kind of work to be done. One lonely lady likes to make baby bootees, sits up in bed at night to do it, and there is always a supply of cut material waiting for her. If a worker has her heart set on featherstitching, she featherstitches. Some of the baby things they turn out are severely practical, others are the exquisitely ornamental sort that would sell for high prices. Every garment turned out has its own individuality. No drab institutionalism. Even the different garments in a layette have a delightful variety of stitching. A housewife with strictly limited sewing experience has lined 14 men's overcoats. She persuaded a tailor to show her how to do it. One heroic soul who earns her living as a companion has darned 3,168 socks. In the evenings a dozen or so Armenian, Turkish and Syrian women from the mill section of the town come in to cut and mend. Women who don't want to sew can sort, or cut, or tear, or pack, or simply do errands. Children glue small scraps of woolen onto muslin as lining for quilts, or they sort shoes, polish them and put in new laces.

"We don't order people around," Mrs. Curtis repeats. "We keep everything flexible. We don't specify what workers shall do—the skills they have and the material on hand do the specifying." A prominent society woman took on the worst job of all—sorting the used garments when they come in. Almost any day you can find her in a corner at the back of the shop, assisted by Henry, the Negro janitor (also a voluntary worker), going through stacks of old shoes, coats, dresses, hats, deciding what is worth making over and what isn't.

When their three months in the A & P store was up and they had to move out, a Newark bank lent them another. There was a second vacant store beside it, and quietly the Workroom overflowed into that, with the landlord's approval. They are most careful to explain to possible renters how quickly they could move out.

The electric light people gave them current for lights and sewing machines. When cold weather came, the coal company gave them coal. Churches lent tables. Sewing machines were loaned; a great deal of stationery was donated. Shoes are put in order free by local cobblers. One of them, asked why he did it, replied: "For humanity. I can't do much, but what I can I like to do. It makes me feel good." The head of a local department store said: "Of course I give them broken stock and left-overs and ends. Those women haven't got the idea that any sloppy job is good enough for charity. They send out really good stuff."

They have approximately 100 garments dry cleaned or laundered each week, and that is done gratis, too. An Armenian cleaner wanted the privilege of doing all their cleaning. He said: "I come to this country 28 years ago without a cent. This town of Summit has give me all I have. I sent two girls to college. Now's my chance to do something for America."

Scraps

From the experience of the past year, Mrs. Curtis and her committee chairmen have worked out a technique for getting the most out of scraps. Two one yard samples will make a little boy's suit. Five half yard samples will make pajamas for a child. Two quarter yard samples will make panties for a little girl, two one yard samples a dress. They make baby pads out of cotton rug linings, and quilts both warm and pretty out of nothing but small samples.

Nothing is too small or too outlandish for use. When they have odds and ends that won't shape into usable garments to send abroad, they make them into toy animals, dolls, etc., and sell them to get needed cash to buy yarn and flannel—virtually the only things they have to buy. Last Christmas, faced with remnants of curly black artificial fur, they made toy scotties and netted $100 thereby.

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A Summit girl who works as secretary with a big New York cotton goods firm started the flood of mill samples that now comes regularly. She put together a little sample case showing the surprisingly pretty things that can be made out of almost nothing, and used her lunch hours to trot around to other firms in the wholesale dry goods area. Almost always the result was instantaneous. "Why, we have a lot of stuff, old samples and odd bits, not worth anything. If you can make things like that out of scraps you're more than welcome to them."

That was last year. Since then thousands of yards of material have been donated by New York firms. Last June the Workroom opened a big sample room in a vacant store in the Manhattan textile center. The idea is to show textile men what can be done with what they throw away, and tempt the girls who work in that district to form the habit of sewing on their commuting trains and taking material home for their mothers to work on.

Several bridge clubs and luncheon clubs in Summit and neighboring towns changed themselves into sewing clubs and came in asking for work. Summit-sojourners in Florida last winter took sewing with them, sent back finished batches and asked for more.

Explaining how it happened that the "something out of nothing" idea has already spread so far, Mrs. Curtis says: "I think it's partly because we never appeal for funds. It's the fact that we are doing it ourselves. Do you know where a large part of our money comes from? People put coins in the glass fish bowl that stands on the Workroom desk. A very little goes a long way."

In the branch Workrooms that have sprung up around Summit, the local chairmen are careful to follow the Summit principle of letting workers do what they want and making the best use of any material that comes in. Farm women drive in from the country and meet with the villagers in whatever public room or private house is available. Their specialties are little boys' suits (rural women have a genius for cutting down grown men's worn suits into miniature size) and making quilts.

The products of the Workroom are shipped through the Committee of Mercy in New York. The clothing goes wherever the need is greatest. At one time it was France. It's England now, and will continue to be so as long as the present emergency lasts. But they are always ready to answer requests from American communities.

Last winter fifty backwoods Tennessee children went to school a whole term in clothes the Workroom collected in just one week. There wouldn't have been any school that term without those clothes. In the late spring the house occupied by a Negro family burned to the ground, and at the request of the town's Overseer of the Poor, the Workroom provided the family with new clothes and bedding. The Workroom can supply almost any need in short order, because there is no red tape and no complications of forms to be gone through.

What time she can spare from cutting and sewing and planning in the Workroom Mrs. Curtis has devoted to answering requests for information about it, and to giving talks before women's organizations. In giving advice to other communities who want to try the "something out of nothing" idea, Mrs. Curtis always warns them not to make elaborate plans. "Use what you have, in goods and in talents," she says, "and don't worry about money. The idea is simple. And it works."

And it is the town of Summit that has made it work. All sorts of people, all sorts of nationalities and walks of life. Ask the head of the Summit Express Company why he, a business man, carries free the crates and barrels that go each Thursday from the Summit Workroom to the New York office of the Committee of Mercy, and he glares at you. "I hope I still have a little idealism," he says indignantly.

Ask the policeman on Main Street where the Refugee Relief Workroom is. He looks puzzled, then beams. "Oh, you mean OUR Workroom," he says. "A block and a half down on the left."

"If a thing like this will succeed in Summit," said a citizen, "it will succeed anywhere. We're rather sharply divided into social classes, the commuters, the mill-people, the shop-keepers, and I've heard it said you could never bring us together on anything. But the Workroom shows that if you get a *real* idea, you can bring *any* town together—with enthusiasm."

And why can't the same salvage of waste, the enthusiastic pooling of time and skill, which this New Jersey town has brought to the aid of hapless people abroad be enlisted by any town for the aid of its own hapless citizens, year in, year out?

The Leaven of the Pharisees

The leaven of the Pharisees
  Will work to the world's end:
I am a whited sepulchre—
  And so are you, my friend.

The chief seats in the synagogue
  Still are cushioned snug:
We kneel with prayer-books in our hands,
  Pious and prim and smug.

Clean out the dead men's bones! Cast out
  The all pervasive leaven—
Else publican and whore shall go
  Before us into heaven!

THEODORE MAYNARD.

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St. Paul in June

The impressions of a journalist at the eucharistic congress.

By Barrett McGurn

AT ALL GREAT EVENTS there is an hour of climax, one incident, which to each spectator is the most significant of all. Usually it is not the most important episode, often not the official climax. For me at the eucharistic congress in St. Paul and Minneapolis, the most touching instant, fraught with meaning, was not the final procession of the Blessed Sacrament in which 80,000 walked, nor even the Benediction which closed the congress, a service at which 125,000 worshipped. For me the most moving moment was late at night at the end of the second day, the moonless night of the open-air Holy Hour and Midnight Mass for men.

Sixty thousand men were present. Twenty-six thousand filled the seats in the grandstand, and thousands upon thousands more sat on unpainted wooden benches, or knelt in the powdery dust of the racetrack infield where the five-story high altar was erected.

Then Archbishop Mitty stepped to the microphone of the temporary racetrack altar to preach. To us in the press box there was little newsworthy in what he said. He spoke only what Christ had spoken. Only what the Fathers of the Church, the missionaries, the priests in the confessionals, the nuns in the classrooms had repeated for centuries.

He came to those 60,000 men, many of them doubtless not of the Church, and held up before them what the Church has to offer its members. He held up the cross. He told those thousands upon thousands that the way of the faithful was the way of the Cross, that the Church preached Christ and Him crucified, that the Church offered a man only the assurance that he must sacrifice and suffer.

To those who would join the Church he displayed none of the rewards in this world that the advocates of secular institutions present to prospects. He promised no riches, he promised no fame, he promised no social importance, he did not even promise health. He promised only sacrifice.

Sitting a few feet from him, watching the odd night lights as they played upon his strong features, listening to that message that offered no ease, no self-indulgence, no rest in the endless struggle for perfection, the listener had but one thought: Where else in this world would so uncomfortable an invitation be offered? Gazing out over the sea of attentive faces turned up toward the Archbishop, another question came as a corollary. Where else would such an invitation be accepted?

The Holy Hour neared its end. The lights in the stands and the spotlights on the field were snapped off. There was an instant's pause, and then a dozen points of flame flared up in the grandstand near the center, thirty rows high on the slanted tier. They were the first of the blessed candles, one of which was carried by each of the men. A hundred more came on, and then in a rising crescendo, more and more and more stabbed the darkness until the grandstand became a parish church's stand of votive lamps. Out on the field the same phenomenon had happened. A lighted candle burned in the hand of every man, and 60,000 faces glowed with the light.

Midnight arrived and Mass began. Archbishop Cicognani, the Apostolic Delegate, was the pontifical celebrant. As the consecration was reached and passed, a distant tinkling floated over the field. Dismissed at first as an illusion, the tinkling deepened.

Turning then toward the 4-H building of the Minnesota State Fairgrounds, a few hundred yards away from the track across open terraces, I saw a thrilling sight. One hundred priests, each priest accompanied by two acolytes bearing candles, came walking through the night in a sacred procession. Each priest held a chalice containing hundreds of Hosts.

As the procession entered the track it split at right angles into three processions, one coming straight on into the throngs in the infield, another turning left toward the grandstand, and the last turning right to the back fringes of the crowd on the side of the track farthest from the stand. To let the thousands of communicants in that great throng come individually to the altar to receive would have taken hours, and so the priests went out into the congregation to make the holy distribution.

Another spectacle

The 4-H building, from which the 100 priests carried the Sacred Hosts, was the center of another moving spectacle, repeated night and day

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through the four days of the congress without interruption. Here a large auditorium had been fitted out with dozens of temporary confessionals, and day and night, all through the night, confessions were heard.

Many of them were general confessions. Calling each "my child," the confessors from all parts of America inquired not only into the sins since the last confession but also into the whole mind and soul and attitude toward life of the kneeling pilgrim penitents. Day after day throngs came to be heard.

The residents of the Twin Cities joined in setting a remarkable example of sacrifice and spirituality. Every parish was divided block by block into groups to adore the Blessed Sacrament in relays of an hour apiece through each night as well as each day of the congress. At 2 and 3 and 4 a.m., and at the other hours of the day and night, new groups filed into the churches to take their places in prayer before the Eucharistic God.

Others, in obedience to an episcopal letter from Archbishop Murray of St. Paul, the host to the congress, held themselves in readiness during the congress to give up their own beds to the pilgrims unable to find lodging elsewhere. The Archbishop told them that in such cases they should give their beds to the visitor, and then pass the night in adoration at church, sleeping at home during the day while the pilgrims were at congress sessions.

The last two days of the congress brought something that will never be forgotten in the history of eucharistic congresses. The burning sun beating down from the zenith of a cloudless sky as if through a magnifying glass caused 800 prostrations at the childrens' mass. On the next and last day there were 300 more hospital cases, many of them adults.

Thirty ambulances raced from the open air church in the race track to the two temporary hospitals on the grounds. Back and forth they sped, some carrying away as many as four victims at once. On the last afternoon, the unnerving scream of ambulance sirens lasted hours at a stretch without an interruption, as returning ambulances came back within earshot before departing ambulances had sped far enough way.

Then, as the closing Benediction began, a torrent fell, breaking the heat wave. Water sloshed down over the panama hats of hundreds of priests, washing them out of shape, slumping the brims down over the ears. Suits and dresses were soaked and soaked some more.

"I just left my hat on a hydrant," laughed one woman, as she boarded the Como-Harriet street car for Minneapolis. "Why not? It was ruined."

A similar spirit was shown by most of the other tens of thousands as they stood patiently unsheltered in the downpour while the half-hour Benediction continued. Many smiled. There was an indefinable humor. Perhaps it was the humor visible to those who through days of prayer and meditation and instruction had come to see intimately that there was no lasting ease, not even any perfect happiness in the world, only discomfitures and sorrows that are way points on the road to an eternal happiness.

In all the sessions of the congress the cross was held up to the pilgrims. Business men were told that they must admit their employees to the profits and the management of business. Employees were told they must render an honest hour's work for every hour's pay. Soldiers at nearby Fort Snelling were told they must be ready to die for their country. Priests, seminarians, missionaries, professional men, nurses, students, teachers—all were told that they must accept sacrifice.

It was a hard doctrine. In it there was not sight of an armistice in each heart's struggle, no armistice so long as life remains. Yet the thousands knelt in the dust and stood patiently in the rain, and Cardinal Dougherty, the Papal Legate, predicted at dusk on the final day that others not yet of the fold would embrace the cross and its way of life as a result of the great convocation.

Prize Essay

How the Catholic College Fits the Girl Graduate to Take Her Place in the World

By KATHRYN BATLINER

In its April 18 issue, THE COMMONWEAL *announced an essay contest on "The Development of Catholic Lay Leaders Through Catholic Colleges," sponsored by the National Federation of Catholic College Students. Out of the many essays submitted, the judges, chosen by the Federation, selected the following essay as winner. Its author has just finished her sophomore year at the College of Saint Theresa, Kansas City, Missouri. Last year she was president of her class and an "A" student, whose favorite subjects were logic and philosophy. Miss Batliner is eighteen years old and lives in Kansas City. Other winners in the contest were Miss Virginia Wilcox of Siena College, Memphis, Tennessee ("The Development Through Catholic Colleges of Catholic Lay Leaders to Promote Interracial Justice") and Brother Charles Lawrence, F.S.C., of de la Salle College, Washington, D. C. ("Catholic Lay Leaders and Their Catholic Literary Heritage").*—The Editors.

IN A LONDON not harassed by Messerschmidts and Heinkels a meeting was held a few years ago which established the first English School of Catholic Action. That this school was intended primarily for women is significant.

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Those in charge realized that it is woman, the mother, who can win the world to Christ, and this restoration of all the activities of the universe to Christ is the essence of Catholic Action. Popes may write inspiring encyclicals, and pastors may preach didactic sermons, but those principles of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man that could transfer our present chaotic universe into a peaceful, God-loving world come not to one while reading an eloquent encyclical, or listening to the persuasive sermon of a priest in the pulpit. No, it is at the feet of a Christian mother, who in imitation of Mary, the perfect mother, is mistress of her house and fond teacher of her little ones, that this burning desire to do good because it pleases God is imbued. It is at the feet of mothers that life-enduring habits and ideals are moulded, and it is here that the foundation of nations is laid. Mothers fashion this foundation, whether it be sturdy and impregnable or flimsy and easily shaken by the evil winds of unrest. But where are our mothers of tomorrow to acquire the blueprint for this foundation? It is for this that the world looks to the Catholic college, that its graduates be the designers and builders of a world civilization that towers straight and unerringly heavenward, built on the lasting foundation of a sturdy cradle.

If not to Catholic colleges, where could the world turn for such leaders? Where could it find higher standards, loftier ideals, or sounder philosophy? The Catholic college student is in an environment *par excellence;* she is there surrounded by all the instruments necessary to achieve that which the intellect forever seeks, truth. Through the college courses of study the student develops her mind and body to be strong in the pursuit of wisdom and goodness. Through the extra-curricular spiritual activities, as the Sodality of Our Lady and the Mission Societies, she learns to love and imitate Mary; to appreciate the fact that the lowliest are her brethren and just as worthy of salvation; to experience the pleasant satisfaction of doing good for others and verily, "to taste and see how sweet is the Lord." But social and cultural activities also play a large part in college life, for to be holy implies merely that we do what we should be doing, when we should be doing it, as we should be doing it, and for the right purpose. This formula calls for no "holier than thou" look or a pessimistic attitude, in fact, quite the contrary; for behind unhappiness there is usually sin, while the sinless soul should be gay and lighthearted.

This practical knowledge of how to live happily with people on earth so we will be prepared to live happily in heaven is the blueprint that the Catholic college offers her graduates in the form of a diploma—a draft in the abstract by which she can make the foundation of her home concrete.

Let's consider a girl graduate of a Catholic college in her all-important rôle of wife and mother.

Realizing fully from her religion and sociology that one of the two main purposes of matrimony is the propagation of the race, she does nothing to frustrate this end. She brings her children into the world with that sublime satisfaction that she is God's instrument in the working of a miracle. She knows that these children are God's and she must return them to Him with interest on the day of judgment. With this uppermost in mind always, she teaches her children that love of God comes first, then love of neighbor. This mother is a member of the Church society to which she should belong, for she knows that with the sacred rights attached to membership in the Mystical Body of Christ also accrue duties of which this is one. She realizes that she is one of God's specially privileged in being permitted the manifold blessings of a Catholic college education, and when there is need of one to step forward and lead the others she is that one.

Races may be annihilated, governments may perish, and troubles and sorrows may come in her own home life, but the Catholic mother knows God must triumph, for her college philosophy has taught that there is a divine wisdom in all things and this brings a great solace.

College pictured new vistas and greater heights of beauty to the graduate. This valuation and appreciation her children inherit, much as they inherit their physical nature. They learn that the soul is always seeking beauty, for where there is beauty there is God, Beauty Supreme. Music, art, sculpturing, nature—all produce beauty, but the greatest beauty is God-like beauty, beauty of soul. What living and sympathetic children this mother has, who has taught them not to scoff at a torn and twisted body but to look for the beautiful soul that may animate that body. It is this regard of man as a composite of body and soul that will influence these children when in future years they become captains of industry and leaders over men. They will never drive their employees as slaves, or glorify machines while they exploit human life. So the mother, knowing ethically what's right and wrong, will direct the footsteps of her toddling babe along a straight and narrow path, so that accustomed to the rigidity of righteousness at an impressionable age, he may follow with ease, when world attractions could make it difficult.

In developing mothers who will bring the reign of Christ in their homes, the Catholic college is doing a giant work in the protection and advancement of civilization. And the Catholic college graduate who accepts her responsibility of being a leader in Christ's army, by her stalwart example guiding others to the Author of Truth, is truly our greatest national defense.

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Views & Reviews

BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

IN HIS very notable radio address on Sunday, July 6, the Bishop of St. Augustine, Most Reverend Joseph P. Hurley, expressed points of view which should give direction to many puzzled minds and strength to many waverings wills among the American Catholic citizens now involved with all their fellow citizens in the enormous problems and perils confronting our nation. If his words were of value only to Catholics, however, they would not have possessed the truly national force which in fact they possessed. As a matter of fact, while naturally what this highly experienced Bishop told his fellow citizens was of special interest to Catholics, his clear and forceful and practical outlines of the reasonable way for citizens of a free, democratic society to behave when confronted by a national emergency will be welcomed by all patriotic citizens irrespective of their personal or corporate religious affiliations, or their lack of such ties. Incidentally to his main advice calling for practical trust in the President's policy, his condemnation of the minority of "Catholic publicists who have been giving expression to views which are comforting to the Axis powers," a group properly characterized as "small but noisy," is a very welcome message.

Coincidentally with the newspaper accounts of Bishop Hurley's inspiring message, there appeared press despatches from Berlin giving extracts from a pastoral letter of the German Catholic bishops, which is described by the Associated Press correspondent as an assault upon the nazi steps against the Church and against dangerous anti-religious tendencies now working among the German people. It was the first such protest given from Catholic pulpits since the start of the war, said the despatch, "and hence it had a startling effect upon the faithful."

Almost equally startling to the world outside of Germany is the fact that the publication of the pastoral letter was permitted by the nazi government, or, having been allowed—though how widely we are not informed—that news of the event should have been permitted to be sent abroad. It may be to the effort to depict the attack upon Russia as a "holy war" of Christian civilization, led by such an apostle at Hitler, was too much of a reversal even in Germany. All Catholics, and, indeed, all Protestants as well, even in propaganda-drenched Germany, know from the most bitter experience not only how fundamental has been the nazi attack upon Christianity in Germany as well as in all parts of the world under its domination, but also how baseless is any hope of any real change.

However, perhaps the Church leaders have been permitted to speak out, on some of their minor grievances at least, so that some sort of temporary reform in the exterior rules of the anti-Catholic campaign may follow. Then there will follow a vast propaganda campaign, especially outside Germany, above all directed toward the United States. Let us therefore be especially grateful for Bishop Hurley's reminder that Hitler's treachery against his comrade in crime in the joint attack upon Catholic Poland is the perfect symbol and proof of the nazi basic philosophy and is not to be regarded as a holy crusade against godless Communism. Hitler is still our Enemy No. 1. Communism, too, is inimical to our national interests, as well as to our Christian faith; but communism does not command the technical equipment for overthrowing our form of government, our form of society, and destroying the cultural basis for Christian civilization to anything like the same extent as Hitler does.

Bishop Hurley pointed out, of course, that he was not acting on a mandate from the Holy See. He spoke as an American citizen, and as one of the leaders of the commissioned teachers and leaders of American Catholics. Yet those who are more than superficially acquainted with the policies and principles of the Holy See since Hitlerism appeared can most readily agree with Bishop Hurley, who spent many years as an important official of the Holy See at the Vatican's Department of State, that there is, as he declares there is, a most striking parallelism between the Vatican policies and the policies of the American government toward the war created by Hitler. It might be added that both the sacred government and our secular government are in full agreement as to the deadly danger of Hitlerism.

Communications

THE NEW FRENCH RÉGIME

South Duxbury, Mass.

TO the Editors: The anonymous letter from France published in THE COMMONWEAL of June 20, 1941, à propos of my article of March 7 on the Pétain régime deserves comment because it is so dangerously misleading. When the writer of the letter claims that "only fools and rascals support the Pétain régime," he evidently ignores, besides any number of eminent men, such representatives of French opinion as Pastor Roegner, President of the Protestant Federation of the Reformed Churches in France, and the Assembly of French Cardinals and Archbishops who, as I recalled in my letter in answer to Professor Simon, agreed that all Frenchmen must rally behind the Marshal.

It is perfectly idle to say as this writer does that the possible action of the Pétain government is limited, because the control of the seas is in the hands of England, two million Frenchmen are prisoners in Germany, Alsace-Lorraine has already been cut off, Paris and occupied France are controlled by the Germans, even in the unoccupied zone the government has to deal with the armistice commission and France is threatened with further amputations. These are the difficulties in the way of the Pétain government. They are not arguments against it. Even if the full government of the French Republic still functioned in France, it would have to face the same facts born of defeat, as Germany had to face like facts in 1918. It is excruciatingly painful to have to recognize these facts, and all my sympathy goes to those who must do so on the spot. But France cannot at the same time be under the

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armistice and be at war with Germany or be free in all her actions. On the other hand, she must guard carefully the sovereignty she retains under the armistice.

To allow that issue to be beclouded is to confuse the international picture in a way that may lead and in fact has already led to the gravest mistakes. The first mistake was to use the words "the Vichy government." The Pétain régime is not the Vichy government. It is *the French* government. There is no other. In fact, the writer of the letter in question had to admit that the Pétain régime is "entirely legal, established by means of a perfectly regular vote of the National Assembly, a joint session of the two Chambers legally invested with constitutional power."

Precisely, and to go out of that legality was to court chaos. For anyone to set himself against this legal government of France was to become a rebel, and it became the unavoidable if painful duty of the government of France to treat him and his followers as rebels.

Hence to make use of such rebels was a hostile act against France. Moreover, to fail to recognize that the government of France was bound in honor to exercise the sovereignty which the armistice left her, the guardianship of her colonies and navy, was also a hostile act against France.

It was therefore an act of war against France for England to recognize de Gaulle, to attack the helpless French navy, to attempt to take Dakar.

It was an act of sympathy for France and of objective statesmanship for the United States to continue to recognize the government of France represented by the Pétain régime which alone, as the legal government, could stand for the continuity of France.

It was therefore also but an act of justice for objective students of events to map out what the government of France under Marshal Pétain was attempting to do.

This, for my part, is all I tried for in my March article. However, since then, events have moved on. There is a sentence in the French letter I am discussing which throws a very special light upon those events. The writer says that the Pétain government is not free, not merely because Germany has placed France under the terms of the armistice, but because "England *controls* the seas." This phrase may well arrest our attention. To say that England is fighting for "the *liberty* of the seas" is of course a partisan phrase. England is fighting for the liberty of the seas for herself and her friends, and for the control of the seas against her competitors—a control which she gained in the nineteenth century. Now she is exercising that control against France and the low countries as well as against Germany and Italy. In her use of it, she is ready to starve them all, late allies as well as fundamental adversaries. Well and good, let us say. But it would be too much to hope that this can be done without consequences. As all western Europe is now feeling the effects of an English blockade, we should not be surprised if henceforth it moved with less reluctance toward an economic cooperation with Germany, and even toward the conviction that there must be a new continental order.

Hence the utmost importance there was in recognizing the Pétain régime for what it really was: the legal government of France. If England had done so and sympathetically helped France, who had done so much for her, to live under the armistice, if, in other words, she had treated the Pétain government as the United States did, we should not be faced with the present gruesome prospect of permanent hostilities between England and France.

Nor are we unconcerned in the matter, as England can now maintain her control of the seas only with our help. The prospect of England and the United States making war against France as well as against Germany and Italy and, utter irony, with the help of Stalin's Russia, is too sickening to entertain. It nevertheless is a possibility stemming directly from the question of the due recognition of the Pétain government. LOUIS J. A. MERCIER.

THE CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

Clarks Summit, Penna.

TO the Editors: I have purposely waited a week or so before attempting an answer to Father Parsons's article on Catholic conscientious objectors to see if an article or letter would appear making my attempt unnecessary. This because, although accepting the pacifist position, I do not care to make use of the argument from the counsels with which Father Parsons's article so largely deals. Not that I think a case cannot be made for the perfectionist view, but that it simply does not appeal to me and I make no use of it in my own stand as a Catholic conscientious objector. But I would like to point out that Father Parsons's rejection of the argument from the counsels, even if valid, by no means settles the question of conscientious objection. The line of reasoning that seems most valid is this: the end does not justify the means: modern mechanical warfare is evil in itself: therefore no end, however good, can justify recourse to it. It would then follow as a logical deduction that if modern warfare is evil in itself, one must in conscience refuse to prepare oneself for participation in it. It seems to me the Catholic pacifist position pretty nearly stands or falls with that proposition. It of course goes beyond Dr. Ryan's contention in his "Modern War and Basic Ethics," that he does not hold modern warfare necessarily evil in itself—though he holds the presumption to be against its justification.

What is especially objectionable in Father Parsons's article is the assertion that the individual should, in practically all cases, yield his judgment as to the morality of war to the state—since the politicians are in a better position to ascertain all the relevant facts. Let that be so, but what are the relevant facts as far as the leaders of the modern secularized states are concerned? Are they not the facts that must be taken into account to provide for the material advancement of one state at the expense of another, and this without any regard to ethical implications? If one is to look at things realistically, would we not say that the modern secularized state serves Christ when it *pays* to serve Him, and more often than not it doesn't pay? Hitler better able to determine the morality of war than the humblest graduate from a penny catechism! Stalin's judgment to be slavishly followed as the echo of good

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morality! The judgment of the leaders in the so-called democracies (who have reduced, or acquiesced in the reduction, of the masses to a hopeless proletarianism) to be followed blindly! Such a proposition leaves little hope indeed for anything effective being done toward the eradication of war.

More and more we move here to the complete acceptance of the servile state. The government is fast becoming *the* great employer and the contention is being upheld that the employees of the state have no right to strike or bargain collectively—there you have the complete economic subjection of the masses—the final baring of the individual before the state. And then the state is made the judge of morals—the individual being incapable of this because he lacks "relevant facts," so that truth is presumed to be with the modern unethical state as against the individual conscience. Well *here* is complete subjection of the person indeed!

And so we march on, goosestepping in our nudeness, before Caesar glorified.

ROBERT C. LUDLOW.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

TO the Editors: May I, as one who registered CO with my local Selective Service board and received a promise of exemption on that ground, take issue with Father Parsons's article in THE COMMONWEAL (June 27)? First of all, let me insist that any discussion would, without doubt, find Father Parsons and myself in complete agreement on any moral principles involved. My quarrel is based purely on matters of fact. Father Parsons admits that a citizen may validly claim exemption on the grounds that a war is unjust. Very good. On that and on all other moral statements we find ourselves in agreement.

The author begins with the statement about the "conscientious objector, whose refusal to accept the right of the nation to conscript him into the army is based, not on the contention that the country is waging an unjust war (since it is not waging a war) but on the doctrine of the Catholic Church, which, it is claimed, teaches that he is exempt from obedience to the state in his special circumstances." Indeed this is the hypothesis upon which the article is built. There are two errors of fact therein. Catholic CO's (to be distinguished from Catholic pacifists) do, in fact, base their position on the idea of an "unjust war." Secondly, they contend, the opposite of what Father Parsons does, that the country indeed is now "waging a war"—the present one which they consider unjust.

Let us dispose of the latter point, since it, as I will show, does not really apply to the type of objector of whom Father Parsons is thinking. Of course no formal declaration of war has been made. But is that necessary for the existence of a war? Our liberal and pragmatic government has never shown a liking for moral principles and is not above ignoring the fine one of an undeclared war. This it is doing, as many of our legislators and other duly constituted authorities admit by their repeated emphasis on our staying out of a "shooting war."

But Father Parsons was talking about the objector who did not draw his position from the contention that the "country is waging an unjust war." Perhaps I am wrong but when one talks of *conscientious* objection, I immediately think in terms of a moral act. If this is sound, and Father Parsons's CO does not base his position on moral teachings, his CO is not a conscientious objector at all, but a pacifist. He is what certain groups call a "religious" objector. His position may or may not be valid. I don't think it is, but that is beside the point. I maintain that the position of the Catholic CO is based on moral grounds, and he therefore occupies a valid position. I know there are a certain number of Catholics who take the stand of religious objectors and call themselves CO's but I maintain they are not representative of the Catholic CO. Father Ryan's "great confusion" certainly applies to them, whether they are right or wrong.

Father Parsons says: "The fundamental assumption which seems to lie behind the current Catholic objectors' position is that the citizen is free to choose whether he will or will not serve in the armed forces of the nation, and if he does serve, it is only because he freely chooses, though he is morally free not to serve if he so choose." I maintain that this statement is not true, that it is not the position of the Catholic CO. I don't say there aren't a certain number of amateur and excessively dogmatic theologians who hold to this position, I merely claim that it is not a "fundamental assumption" of Catholic *conscientious* objectors. Our contention is that the nation is at war and that the war is an unjust one.

The arguments about the counsels of the Gospel I shall leave with the assertion that they are not the argument of the CO but those of the religious objectors, or pacifists. Father Parsons explains that there "are several confusions" and "not a little error." I agree.

But there are other confusions in this matter of "peace-time" conscription. Confusions which I do not hear voiced at all. This may not seem strictly apropos, but I have to drag it in somewhere and I am sure Father Parsons will bear with me. Logically any debate over the morality of the draft act should concern itself with the principle of conscription as such. The matter of war is something else again. And yet in the discussion of the act, we inevitably find ourselves discussing the morality of the war. This is the fault of the government which does not allow exemption on the grounds of objection to conscription but does allow it because of objection to war. This is to the advantage of the CO, of course, since it is easier to place the stigma of "unjust" on the war rather than on the draft act. If in the questionnaire of a "peace-time" draft, where one is exempted not because of objection to conscription but to war, one reads the implication that it is not a "peace-time" draft at all but a preparation for and a part of an actual war, very good. I do.

So much for the argument about the CO. Theological points I will leave to the theologians so far as this letter is concerned. If Father Parsons thinks this letter worthy of more argument, I shall be glad. I am a contentious person. In any case, I insist that moral teachings will find us in complete agreement. Any quarrel will be over facts.

WILLIAM M. CALLAHAN.

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The Screen

American House of York

IT IS with a film like *"Sergeant York"* that Hollywood again reassures its picture-hungry audiences that it is capable of producing cinematic art. Through the maze of crass, money-making (and not succeeding at this too well) trivia that has been pouring out of the US film center lately, this biographical film shines like a bright light and stands with "Citizen Kane" as the year's best to reestablish Hollywood's reputation as the cinema capital of the world.

Ever since Sergeant Alvin C. York returned from the first World War as a fêted hero, Jesse L. Lasky wanted to film the story of this mountaineer soldier whose sensational capture of 132 Germans in the Argonne Forest won him a breastful of medals. Perhaps York's refusal until now was to our advantage. Since 1919, cinema has come of age; and in 1941, York's life, background and exploits could, through intelligent research and the improvements in motion picture making, be treated with artistry and integrity not possible during the days of the early silent pictures. Under Producers Lasky and Hal B. Wallis at Warner Brothers' studio, four scriptwriters wrote the stirring screenplay which Howard Hawks directed with a first-rate cast.

It is particularly in the first half of "Sergeant York" that one is impressed with Hawks's fine direction, the well-written dialogue and the sincerity of the script based on York's diary. Instead of falling into the easy trap of burlesquing the Tennessee hillbillies, the film presents its characters with an honest and realistic simplicity. A different and not too well known cross section of Americana is pictured vividly by the York family and their neighbors in the Valley of the Three Forks of the Wolf in the Cumberland Mountains. These hard working, sometimes hard drinking, frequently religious folk, who speak a colorful but sparse, somewhat Elizabethan brand of English, are as truly American as the New England Yankee, the city dwellers, the Okies or the Gonewiththewinders.

In an outstanding characterization and in his best performance, lanky rugged Gary Cooper (sans boyish charm and cuteness) makes Alvin York a real, understandable human being, not a vague mythical hero from another war. Through the person of Cooper you see this York who tilled the rocky soil, carried on like a "heller" when he got drunk, fell in love with a girl and worked like mad to pay for a piece of bottom land so this girl would marry him. You see York hunting the fox, as a supermarksman at a turkey shoot, and in one magnificent scene as a humbled, repentant sinner getting religion. Then there came into the life of this convert, as it did to thousands of other Americans in 1917, the draft for the war. In spite of York's "Ain't goin' to war. War's killing," he is drafted. In the training camp (and in scenes which are some of the best of their kind in films) York is thrown in with men from all over the country. Soon he is spotted by his superiors as an expert rifleman, and he is offered a promotion. At home on a furlough Alvin goes up into the mountains with the Bible and an American History to study this thing out. He understands the fight for freedom, that the American heritage must be protected and that to Caesar must be rendered the things that are Caesar's. Although still reluctant to kill he returns to camp to accept his corporalship. Then on that eventful October 8, 1918, during the battle of the Argonne, this brave conscientious objector performs his daring feat that is so spectacular that it can be believed only because it is true. Later York admits that he killed to prevent more killing. And after a long series of honors, medals, the triumphal New York parade, the refused commercial contracts, York was free to return to his home valley—a national hero, but still a simple man of honest faith.

If we are to have patriotic movies—and the times indicate that we are in for many of them—let them be like "Sergeant York"—inspiring, sincere, unpretentious and without maudlinism. Here is a film that extols American virtues with the ringing, robust voice of Walt Whitman. Here is a moving and dramatic film that deserves praise for its insight into a man. It deserves praise for its good production and fine performances by Gary Cooper, Margaret Wycherly, Walter Brennan, Joan Leslie, George Tobias, Stanley Ridges and a large cast of minor players. It deserves praise for its dedication to the day when peace will reign on earth.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Books of the Week

A Fine Novel

The Land of Spices. Kate O'Brien. Doubleday. $2.50.

NOVELS about convents, as indeed all novels dealing with things Catholic, have tended, particularly among English-writing authors, to fall into two categories. Everyone in the convent, particularly the nuns, has been a gilt and plaster saint with none save minor problems and aberrations to solve. Or everyone in the convent is an unpleasant neurotic, the children in their care are tortured with varying degrees of subtlety, and all the nuns took the habit for strictly Freudian reasons. Those in the first category are written by overzealous and incompetent women who have too little to do with themselves and decide they will write a "Catholic novel," whatever that is. Those in the second category are frequently written by more competent writers who err usually through ignorance but occasionally through malice.

All this by way of saying that the distinguished Irish writer and journalist, Miss Kate O'Brien, has given us a very fine, objective, subtle and even beautiful novel about a convent and its school.

Mother Mary Helen Archer, an Englishwoman, is the Mother Superior of the Irish House of a French order of nuns, the Compagnie de Sainte Famille. At the age of eighteen she entered the Order, as much to her own surprise as to anyone else's and for what an intelligent confessor would have told her was not a good reason. For she had mentioned to no one the terrible experience which prompted her to take the veil and she was to live frequently to realize, as she grew older, that she had become a nun for the wrong reason.

To say that the thesis of the novel is that one who became a nun with something less than a pure intention be-

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came, through God's grace and her own will and intelligence, a very fine nun, is to oversimplify badly a work distinguished for its many subtleties and its full knowledge of the ramifications of the religious life. And yet this is what Miss O'Brien has to say, in her own special manner, with its universal application, and with infinitely more effect than hundreds of sermons, pamphlets and their fictional counterparts.

Running parallel to the nun's story is that of the child, Anna Murphy, and of her spiritual and mental coming of age. Anna remains shadowy and I think the author intended her so. She is a special type and it is easy to see her as autobiographical, although lacking the mawkishness of most autobiographical characters.

The title comes from George Herbert: "the land of spices, something understood," and the Mother Superior's whole life is given over to the attempt to understand. The effort produces seemingly strange effects: humility, kindness, even warmth, and, the flesh also being subtle, vanity. In her fifties she is a wise and lovely woman, puzzled but exalted that she has been chosen for the Mother General of the Order and must return to the mother house in Belgium on the eve of the first World War. . . .

Graham Greene has written that the mercy of God is appallingly strange and it is perhaps significant that the only other English-writing novelist who writes of things Catholic with distinction, has fashioned her latest book about the same or a similar thought.

"The Land of Spices" is, undoubtedly, one of the two or three best novels of the year. So little good fiction has been written in the last three or four years that one would think a major publishing house would recognize a novel of this calibre when it saw it and give it—which this one has not—a commensurate binding and format.

HARRY SYLVESTER.

HISTORY

The Long Week End. Robert Graves and Alan Hodge. Macmillan. $3.00.

A CLEVER piece of writing with deeply satiric and even cynical implications, "The Long Week End" convinces the reader to a moderate degree both of the general imbecility of English social and political habits from the armistice, 1918, to "Rain Stops Play, 1939," and of the superior detachment of the authors. It is difficult to know just what angers the authors most (anger is not the right word—their voice is never raised above a chill comment) in the twenty years of national ineffectuality. But the story as they unfold it tells of the rapid breakdown of the conventionality of life in a culture that has ceased to be nourished at the roots. The book is scarcely disillusioned or defeatist—but rather brilliantly bored, as if a highly developed analytical faculty had nothing to work on but chimeras, and beyond nothing was more nothing.

It may be an unfair comment, but this reviewer gets the impression that if a communist trained in the withering tradition of criticism were to see the futility of his own dogma and at the same time desired to write a book tracing the history of a country marked by a compromised church, a compromised morality, a compromised democracy and a compromised political economy, this is the sort of book he would write.

On the surface the book is innocuous—it is a "Social History" based upon newspapers. The indications are that the authors have made the current discovery that the

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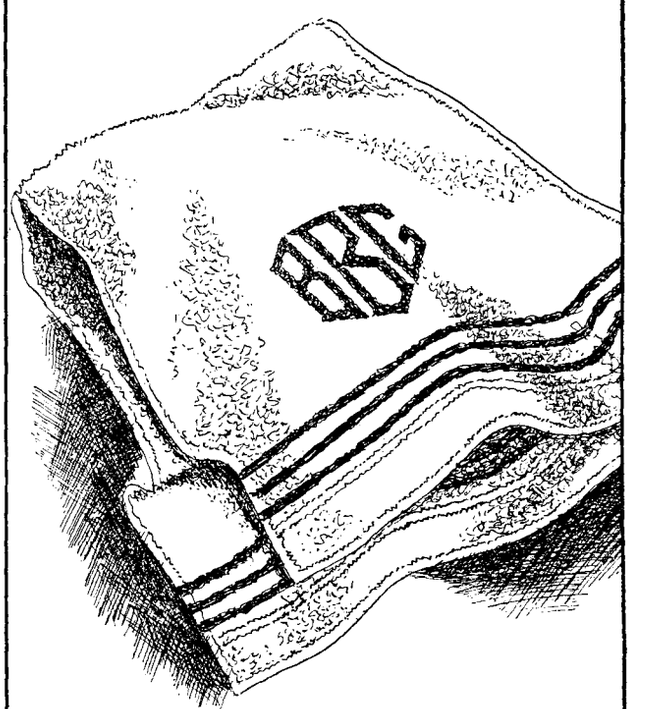

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masses are rather stupid (they and you and I being omitted). "The more newspapers people read, the shorter grows their historical memory; yet most people read little else." Hitler has said the same thing better in *Mein Kampf*, but the authors are more consistent than Hitler in finding no master race absolved from the general human distinction of being fools. The authors may, in fact, be considered connoisseurs in selecting details and in so juxtaposing and arranging them that even English culture with its rapid disintegration from a modified aristocratic and hierarchic tradition to a cheap commercialism accompanied by all the banality of tabloids and Woolworths appears worse than it really is. Many facts mentioned in the narrative heavily emphasize the various faddistic escapes practiced by individuals at the mercy of the chaos produced by the watering of all sound tradition, so that Buddhism or bestiality were all one if practiced by persons with good manners. Paradoxically, too, the pharisaic tendency of the middle classes fits in logically with this amorality—for, since the eighteenth century, their literature has been one of prudery and vicarious sin, that was so well pipe-lined to them by their popular press in the period under consideration.

Yet what the authors do not emphasize is the sound constitution of a country that has stood up under the assault of so many diseases. And curiously enough, it may be "The Long Week End" and the love of cricket and countryside that are the symptoms not of inertia but sanity. Leisure (call it laziness, if you choose) has been the channel through which many of the finer aspects of English life have been preserved.

Needless to say the book is excellent reading—it hits the formula of salty writing perfectly, but it is not to be trusted.

WILIAM J. GRACE.

BRIEFERS

Restless Are the Sails. Evelyn Eaton. Harpers. $2.50.

A BLOOD AND THUNDER historical novel of New England and Nova Scotia (1744-1746). Its division into short chapters appropriately makes for rapid reading. The siege and fall of Louisburg is the highlight of a narrative, based as many recent books, on considerable historical research. But the author is deeply interested in people, too, and the progress of her leading characters through wilderness, storms at sea, war, privateering, intrigue and love contributes some illuminating commentary on human nature. The hero's development is unusually convincing. Absorbing light reading.

Living Biographies of Great Poets. Henry Thomas and Dana Lee Thomas. Garden City. $1.98.

IN A SHORT introduction, which merely lauds the function of poets, the authors fail to give the raison d'être as subjects for this collection of biographies of twenty of them: Dante, Chaucer, Villon, Milton, Pope, Burns, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Shelley, Keats, Browning, Tennyson, Swinburne, Bryant, Poe, Longfellow, Whittier, Whitman and Kipling. The biographies, written in a style, sometimes undeveloped, sometimes simpering (e.g., "And now we come to the strangest singer of them all—'our sad, bad, glad, mad brother,' Francois Villon."), offer little more than an encyclopaedia. The impression that this is a "hack" job is all too frequent, for certainly there is little original character analysis. A key to this can be had in the easy acceptance of the Santayana verdict on Dante and the *Inferno*: "the

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work of a sublime imagination turned sour." The *Inferno* itself is misquoted, referring to the Pope Boniface passage as follows: "'Are you already standing there?' asks Dante eagerly. . . . 'Are you already there, Boniface?'" Even popularized ("living," to use the adjective of the title) biographies should be accurate. J. G. B.

Airports. John Walter Wood. Coward McCann. $12.50.

JOHN WALTER WOOD has spent the best part of ten devoted years gathering the material in this first comprehensive volume on airports. Every Chamber of Commerce, all aviation fans, the Army and Navy, and people who like to know how things work will find this authoritative study fascinating. H. L. B.

Milton and His Modern Critics. Logan Pearsall Smith. Little, Brown. $1.50.

THIS LITTLE BOOK is of greater consequence than its bulk would indicate. Logan Pearsall Smith, who is one of the most expert writers of our day, rises to defend his best beloved Milton against the onslaught of two other transplanted Americans, T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound, who with the aid of the younger English critics have almost succeeded in dethroning the Puritan poet from his great place in English letters. The book is of much interest to all who love Milton, to all who are concerned with the activities of Eliot and Pound, and to all who appreciate fine writing. Mr. Smith, for all his urbanity, does not spare the barbed lash on Mr. Pound, the blustering Sage of Rapallo, and with a nice regard for the proper choice of weapons, refutes Mr. Eliot with as delicate an indirectness as ever came from the lips or pen of the pontiff of Russell Square. It is an admirable performance critically, and an entertaining one from any point of view. M. W.

The South American Handbook: 1941. *H. W. Wilson.* $1.00.

THIS useful information about Cuba, Mexico, Central and South America comes to us via England. The anonymous editor of this handbook, now in its eighteenth edition, is at the Head Office of the Royal Mail Lines, running from United Kingdom ports to South America. As this book of reference is intended especially for the English traveler, you will not be surprised to find all the addresses of British Consuls, but not of those of the United States. The chapters on natural resources, history and administration of the different countries are of high standard. An excellent colored map is added as well as little maps of communications. M. F.

The Wild Seventies. Denis Tilden Lynch. Appleton-Century. $5.00.

ALTHOUGH Boss Tweed and his fellows have been laid away these many years, Denis Tilden Lynch, in his sensationalized account of Tweed's era, rails at the gusty politicos of the period as angrily as if they still kept mansions on Fifth Avenue. Angry author Lynch has even less patience with bankers, whom he usually dismisses as "crooked." In this distorted history of the 'seventies, the catastrophic downfall of Jay Cooke and Company is disposed of in a sentence or two. And rat-baiting is given an entire chapter. Little appreciation is shown for the forces which shaped the decade. Lynch lists none of his sources.

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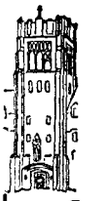

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Next Week

THE "WAR" BEHIND THE WAR, by Donald Attwater, discusses with the author's usual clarity and acumen what is really behind the present open, military conflict, and points out that military action can scarcely supply a solution since the causes which produced that action lie outside the military sphere.

RUSSIA AT WAR, by Helen Iswolsky, ventures several guesses at the future of a great country and the outcome of the present nazi invasion. It insists upon a distinction between the Bolshevik Party and the Russian people—a distinction which Miss Iswolsky considers essential to any understanding of today's events.

CHURCH MICE AND MEN, by J. A. McGurk, continues in a vein begun some months ago by the same author. He is a missionary in the Canadian Far West, and he has his tribulations with his scattered flock. In delightfully humorous style.

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The Inner Forum

PIERRE TOUSSAINT was a Negro born in slavery. He belonged to a family of Haitians named Bérard, who in 1787 migrated to New York. In time they became impoverished and M. Bérard died. Meanwhile Toussaint had learned the art of hairdressing, and had also become a most active and valued member of St. Peter's parish. With the decline in the Bérard fortunes, he turned to his skill to earn a living, not only for himself, his wife and his niece, but also for his widowed mistress, whom he took care of until her death in 1810. This was also the date on which Toussaint achieved freedom. For the remainder of his life he practiced his art, having the most distinguished clientèle in New York. He lived a life of great sanctity, going to Mass daily and giving a great part of his income to the many charities in which he was interested. He was a trustee of St. Peter's and revered by many of New York's leading citizens. When he died (in the 50's), the pastor of his church said: "There were few among the clergy superior to him in devotion and zeal for the Church and for the glory of God; among laymen, none."

Since Toussaint left no family, his niece having died as a young girl and he having no children of his own, it was natural that time should obliterate his memory from most men's minds. Only among the descendants of his most intimate friends was his memory cherished, and even they did not preserve any knowledge of the whereabouts of his grave. Some months ago, Mr. Charles McTague, a student at Seton Hall College, decided to try to find the grave, and after careful research was able to determine with fair certainty where it lies in the graveyard of the old St. Patrick's Cathedral. The Interracial Council then decided to hold brief memorial services at the grave. On Sunday, June 29, a small group of persons gathered in the church yard to hear tribute paid to this saintly Negro. The principle speaker was Dr. Leo R. Ryan, who wrote the official history of old St. Peter's Church. Other speakers were Dr. E. P. Roberts, a prominent Negro physician in Harlem, Rev. Ercole J. Rossi, pastor of old St. Patrick's, and the Managing Editor of THE COMMONWEAL, who is a great-grandson of Louis F. de P. Binsse, intimate friend and admirer of Toussaint. After the brief ceremony at the grave, Solemn Benediction took place in the Church and the Rev. John LaFarge, S.J., spoke briefly on the significance of the event.

CONTRIBUTORS

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